THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND—

The ninety-sixth anniversary of the birthday of Charles Dickens will be celebrated this month on four of the five continents—possibly on all five, but we are not able to speak definitely of India. This, in itself, is a remarkable tribute to the ever-green popularity of Dickens, but the tribute becomes all the more noteworthy when we note that at least 15,000 people will be taking part in these celebrations. In London, on February 7th, there will be two events: the dedication of the National Dickens Library at the Guildhall in the afternoon, and the annual dinner of the Boz Club in the evening.

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On the following day the Dickens Fellowship will hold its celebration in the shape of a public meeting at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C. The President, Mr. Henry F. Dickens, K.C., will be in the chair, and will deliver his annual presidential address. He will be supported by the following Vice-Presidents:—Miss Georgina Hogarth, Mrs. Henry F. Dickens, the Misses Olive and Elaine Dickens, Mr. Francesco Berger, Mr. W. Walter Crotch, Mr. Edmund Dickens, Mr. J. C. Parkinson, Mr. M. H. Spielmann, and Mr. H. Snowden Ward; while it is hoped that Sir William P. Treloar, Bart., and Sir Francis Burnand will also be present. A series of Dickens recitals will be given by Mr. Ernest Wellbeloved and party, and the evening will be an enjoyable one. Members will be admitted free on production of their cards of membership. Admission to non-members will be 6d. The meeting will commence at 8 o'clock.

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Our readers will be pleased to hear that arrangements are so far completed as to make it possible to hand over "The National Dickens Library" to the City of London. The ceremony is fixed to take place on the anniversary of Dickens's birthday on the 7th of this month, in the Guildhall Library, when Lord James of Hereford, on behalf of the Dickens Fellowship, will present the Library to the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of London, who will accept the gift on behalf of the City Corporation in trust for the Dickens Lovers throughout the world. Further particulars will be found on another page. Although the funds received are just sufficient to purchase the nucleus from Mrs. F. G. Kitton, a further sum of from £25 to £50 is still required to make the library thoroughly representative and to cover certain expenses in connection with it. May we make another appeal to our readers to help towards this realisation?

Every one of our readers will join with us in offering our heartiest congratulations to Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A., on his attaining his ninetieth birthday, and on the honour which His Majesty has conferred upon him, namely, Membership of the Victorian Order in the Third Class. Mr. Frith was one of Dickens's personal friends, and everybody knows his famous portrait of the author, as well as his paintings of Dolly Varden and other Dickens pictures. He has been a Vice-President of the Fellowship since its start, and its members wish him continued health and strength.

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It would be difficult to state how many times during Christmas week "A Christmas Carol" was publicly recited. Several can be counted in our Branch reports in the January and the present number. But there are hundreds of other occasions which do not actually come under our notice. For many years past Birmingham has made a speciality of Dickens's masterpiece, and on December 22nd last the Sunday Lecture Society was responsible for the arrangement of nine simultaneous renderings of it in different schools in the city. Mr. Ben Nathan, as usual, was at the Town Hall, where he kept a packed audience in rapt attention throughout the whole of his recital. Excellent renderings were given at the other places by well-known gentlemen of the city. At Stratford Road and at the Public Baths, Selly Oak, two of these were members of the Birmingham Branch of the Fellowship, Mr. John Harrison and Mr. William Farrow respectively.

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An extraordinary situation presented itself at a recital at Liverpool. Mr. Lancelot Lowder, a local teacher of elocution, gave a recital of Dickens's masterpiece to some of his friends at the Roscoe Rooms there, to which members of the public were admitted on payment at the doors. The Head Constable of the city, however, maintained, and his ruling has been supported by the Liverpool Justices, that a recital of "A Christmas Carol" can only be given on premises licensed for "music, dancing, and singing." Consequently a fine was imposed upon Mr. Lowder for breaking the law of the land. This is truly a very curious state of affairs, for everyone knows that the "Carol" is recited every year in hundreds of chapels, church halls, and schoolrooms throughout the country, where payment is taken for admission, usually in aid of charity. As this decision is likely to be wide reaching, Mr. Lowder has given notice of appeal to the High Court, and in the meantime solicits opinion on the matter from all those interested.

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We have received a copy of Mr. Edwin Charles's "Keys to the Drood Mystery," and shall hope to review it in our next number. Mr. Charles answers the query, "Was Drood murdered?" in the affirmative, and confirms the opinion of Mr. Willoughby Matchett that Datchery was Bazzard. The book is illustrated by Ernest Coffin, one of whose pictures is a drawing from the well-known portrait of Margaret Gillies, which is unfortunately spelt "Geddes" in the book.

THE EDITOR.

"EDWIN DROOD" AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE

MR. TREE AS JOHN JASPER

By J. W. T. LEY

THERE really is very little to be said of Mr. Comyns Carr's adaptation of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, except that it provides Mr. Beerbohm Tree with innumerable excellent opportunities for displaying his skill in melodramatics. As a play it can scarcely be described as a success; as a solution of the eternal mystery it is scarcely worthy of consideration; and if it enjoys anything like a run, we fancy the fact will be attributable to Mr. Tree's acting in the part of Jasper, and to the hold which Dickens still has over most men. Mr. Carr and Mr. Tree have intimated that the production should be judged purely on its merits as a play. It is fair that this should be stated, but nevertheless readers of such a magazine as this will ask for something more. Mr. Carr has taken Dickens's unfinished novel, and for stage purposes has provided a solution to the mystery, and Dickensians are entitled to inquire what the solution is, and to ask themselves how far it is satisfying. And we imagine that few who have studied the story and the various solutions that have been put forth will accept Mr. Carr's version.

We have never taken any part in any of the controversies that have raged round this question, being held back by their very futility, but we have followed the arguments for and against every point at issue with real interest, have admired the ingenuity of the disputants, and have formed as definite an opinion as any ordinary layman may hope to form. That Drood was actually murdered is a conviction we have always held, and not even Mr. Andrew Lang has shaken it. Mr. Comyns Carr says "No," and is at once confronted with a serious difficulty—the difficulty of finding an adequate explanation for his disappearance. This is a difficulty which, in our opinion, he has failed to surmount, and so not only weakened the merits of his play, but has, in the very outset robbed his solution of weight. For the reason that he gives is simply this—Jasper is possessed by a mad passion for Rosa, and imagining that Drood stands in the way of the attainment of his desire to possess her, is torn between a determination to remove his nephew out of his path, and a dread of the crime. On Christmas Eve he dines with Drood and Neville Landless at his own rooms, and drugs the wine that the two young men drink. He foments a quarrel between them, which is quickly ended, and then suggests that they shall go for a stroll down by the river. Soon Drood returns, fuddled with the drugged wine, and goes to bed. Jasper is a victim of opium, and we are told continually that this, and this only, has saved him from the crime often. We learn, too, that when under the influence of the drug he has many times dreamed that he was murdering his nephew. On this Christmas Eve, Drood having retired, the choirmaster prepares to carry out his long-meditated crime, his first act being to creep to his nephew's room, and to fetch the watch

and chain which the lad wears, because "quicklime won't eat metal." Suddenly the door opens, and Princess Puffer, the keeper of the opium den in London, enters, and Jasper asks for opium. Why Puffer should appear here on this day, and at this moment, and why she should give Jasper pipe after pipe of opium without payment, are questions to which the dramatist provides no answer. Suffice it that these things do happen, and that the woman then leaves the would-be murderer under the influence of the fumes. He then dreams again that he is committing the crime which has been in his thoughts for so long, and he dreams that he strangles his victim, carries him to the cathedral crypt, and buries the body in quick-lime, finally collapsing on the floor. Whilst he is thus raving Drood comes downstairs and sees and hears him, understands the truth, and horrified, decides to fly. In the morning Jasper wakes, and believes that he has actually committed the murder. The belief is confirmed when he finds that he has the watch and chain, and that his nephew's bed has not been slept in.

It will be seen that Mr. Tree has remarkable opportunities in a part like this, but it will also be seen, we think, that we were right in suggesting that the dramatist has failed to provide Drood with an adequate reason for disappearing. Adequate reason for flying he certainly had, but why he should remain silent and lost to all ken for six months, and allow suspicion to rest on Neville Landless all the time, is a mystery deeper than any that the book itself has provided. After this the interest in the play slackens off remarkably. Jasper makes love to Rosa, and in order to save Landless she promises to marry him. But Mr. Grewgious meanwhile informs Jasper that Drood had on him at the time of his disappearance the ring that had belonged to Rosa's mother. Realising that the game is up the man goes to the vault where he believes he placed Drood's body, in order to procure the ring, and is there confronted with Grewgious and Durdles. Finally, just as Landless is about to be arrested, moved (presumably) with pity for Rosa, he confesses to the murder. The last scene of all is amazingly weak. We see Jasper in Maidstone jail infirmary. Drood appears; Jasper at first thinks he is a ghost, realises that he is flesh and blood, fondles him in a sort of delirium, joins his nephew's hand and Rosa's, and dies.

Can this seriously be considered a solution to *The Mystery of Edwin Drood?* If so we are uncompromising in our opinion that a great deal more fuss has been made about Dickens's last work than it deserves. If there were no other considerations whatsoever, we should hold this opinion, but there is one other consideration at least. What of Dick Datchery? None before Mr. Carr has attempted to solve the mystery without basing his chief arguments upon his opinion as to the identity of this "single buffer." Able arguments have been used to show that Datchery was one of the characters in the book, in disguise, and four characters have been named—first Drood himself; then Helena Landless, Bazzard and Tartar. Bazzard and Tartar do not appear in

the play at all. Helena Landless has not 200 words to say, and Datchery is absolutely ignored.

It may be an injustice to Mr. Carr to deal with his solution at such length, but he has invited criticism by the very title of his play, for he has retained the full title of the book. The truth is that it should have been called "John Jasper's Secret." "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" is a misnomer, for there is never any mystery at all. From the start, almost, the audience knows the truth. One cannot help suspecting that the dramatist had before him all the time a vision of Mr. Tree as Jasper, and undoubtedly he has given that actor a splendidly big part. And Mr. Tree is successful, his acting at times reaching a very high standard indeed. In the scene in which it might have been expected he would be at his best—the dream scene—we thought he was scarcely convincing—it seemed as if he might at any moment come down to the footlights and announce, "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm supposed to be dreaming that I am murdering my nephew"; but in the scene in which he accompanies Rosa's song, hypnotising her with his eyes which follow every motion of her lips, and the scene in which Grewgious tells him of the existence of the ring, he was admirable. His acting in the last-named scene in particular was wonderful, the nervous tapping with his fingers on the table, the toying with his handkerchief, &c., being entirely realistic and convincing. On the whole the part of John Jasper has provided Mr. Tree with another triumph. If only that last act could have been avoided!

There is no other substantial part in the play. Next to Jasper, Grewgious has the most opportunities, and happily the part is in the hands of one who knows how to do it full justice. Mr. William Haviland realises the "angular" but kind-hearted old lawyer absolutely, and his acting is simply delightful. Mr. Basil Gill is sympathetic as Edwin Drood, but it is not a great part. Mr. G. W. Anson is in the picture as Durdles, a part that he plays with plenty of quiet humour. Perhaps he is not quite grim enough, but that is no cause for complaint. Mr. Charles Quartermaine gives us something very near our conception of Neville Landless. We cannot say the same of Mr. Frank Stanmore as The Deputy. He does not meet Dickens's description of "a hideous *small* boy." Mr. Tree is to be congratulated on obtaining the services of Miss Adrienne Augarde as Rosa Bud. She might have stepped straight from the pages of the book, so thoroughly does she realise the part. Doll-like she may be, but so was Rosa, after all, and we can understand the remark of the critic who wrote, "The master must have seen her in some previous incarnation." Miss Constance Collier as Helena Landless has far too little to do, but it is unnecessary to say that she does that little well. The truth is that Mr. Tree has been more successful than many managers who have staged Dickens plays in finding actors and actresses to fill the parts, for with scarcely an exception the characters are realised with astonishing fidelity. The pity of it is that some of them are not given more opportunities.

SUPPRESSED DICKENS PLATES

EVERYONE is a "collector" to-day in some sense of the word. It may be postcards or postage stamps; paintings or prints; *bric-à-brac* or books. Perhaps the most interesting of all is books—first editions of books. Among the many points a first edition of a book possesses which makes it "a thing of joy" to the collector is an illustration which for some reason has been cancelled in subsequent issues. Of course the chief attraction of a first edition of an illustrated book is the "state" of the pictures. But however much one is pleased in the possession of such books, to have one with a cancelled or suppressed plate gives the collector the greatest joy.

It is curious that no one has thought of issuing a manual for the guidance of those seeking these rare items until Mr. George S. Layard published a few weeks ago his book entitled "Suppressed Plates, Wood Engravings, &c."* It is a handsome book, crowded with excellent reproductions of many of the pictures referred to in the text, and the next best thing to owning copies of the books in which these pictures appear is to become the proprietor of a copy of Mr. Layard's book. It deals with a multifarious number of subjects, artists and authors, but for the requirements of this magazine it is only necessary to refer to those chapters dealing with Dickens and his illustrators. This is a subject which has been written about several times before, but Mr. Layard's book is the first to give reproductions of the pictures. In some cases, notably the "Fireside" plate from *Oliver Twist*, he gives two "states" of the suppressed plate and of the substituted plate.

The Dickens chapters in the book are devoted to the suppressed portrait of Charles Dickens which we are able, through the courtesy of the publishers, to use as a frontispiece to the number, *Pickwick, The Battle of Life, Grimaldi, Oliver Twist, Martin Chuzzlewit, The Strange Gentleman, Pictures from Italy*, and *Sketches by Boz*. Mr. Layard's knowledge of the differences and varieties of these pictures is as accurate as it is extensive, and he explains and comments on them in an interesting manner. To possess the originals with all these plates in is not possible to everyone. Mr. Layard's book will be a boon therefore to everyone.

MR. F. T. HARRY'S DICKENSIAN RECITAL

OUR readers will be interested to learn that Mr. Fredk. T. Harry (who sustained so excellently the part of Gabriel Varden in the recent performance of *Dolly Varden*) is arranging to give another Dickensian recital on the 11th February next at the Cripplegate Institute, Golden Lane, E.C. The programme will consist of his own adaptation of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, arranged as a three-act play, in which he will sustain the character of "Quilp."

Tickets and full information can be obtained on application to Mr. R. C. Harry, 106, Sandmere Road, Clapham, S.W.

* London: Adam & Charles Black. 10s. 6d. net.

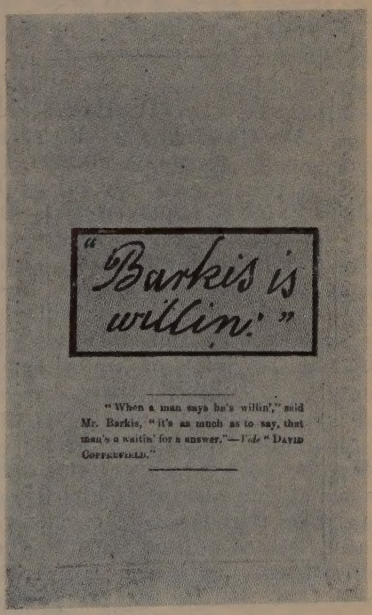
DICKENS AND VALENTINES

By CHAS. VAN NOORDEN

IT is a curious fact that in all the articles on valentines I have read no mention is made of that glorious work of art which called Sam Weller's attention to the proximity of cupid's annual charter and determined him to send a missive of affection to Mary, the pretty housemaid at Mr. Nupkin's, Mayor of Ipswich.

This particular picture which attracted Sam's eye is well worth describing. I have one very nearly like it in my collection, and hope one day to find the great original, for so minute is Boz's description, it must be a portrait.

It consisted of "a couple of human hearts skewered together with an arrow, cooking before a cheerful fire, with a male and female cannibal in modern attire; the gentleman being clad in a blue coat and white trousers, and the lady in a deep red pelisse with a parasol of the same; were approaching the meal with hungry eyes up a serpentine gravel path leading thereunto. A decidedly indelicate young gentleman, in a pair of wings and nothing else, was depicted as superintending the cooking, while a representation of the spire of the church in Langham Place, London, appeared in the distance. The price was 1s. 6d.


"Barkis is willin'"
"When a man says he's willin'," said Mr. Barkis, "it's as much as to say, that man's a waitin' for a answer."—*Vide* "DAVID COPPERFIELD."

THE BARKIS VALENTINE

I have sought for other references to Valentine in the works and life of the novelist, and could find no other until recently. This specimen is reproduced here, and will doubtless interest readers of this magazine.

On showing it to Mr. W. Miller, the hon. librarian of the Dickens Fellowship, he drew my attention to an article in "London Society" for 1871, which shows Dickens's connection with it. The writer of the article, who prefers to remain anonymous, speaks of a friendly visit to Tavistock House one Sunday morning many years ago, where, amongst the many matters spoken of, was that of the recent burning of the ship *Amazon*, which fixes the date of this interview at 1866. He goes on to say, "A design for a valentine was then and there fixed up as a change from the popular missive of Domestic life, whether flowery, poetic or abusive. It was agreed that the simple expression of Barkis's love, as rudely

chalked upon his cart, was admirably suited to the requirements of the fourteenth of February, and thus it was printed at the time. Whether it was ever widely circulated in the form below I cannot say, but so it was decided and approved of by the late Charles Dickens to be used on St. Valentine's Day . . . "

Whether Barkis's saying be in the handwriting of Dickens I cannot say. But the fact remains that the valentine was published. The present specimen came out of a manufacturer's pattern book, undated and unnamed. The date we have ascertained, and perhaps this publicity will bring us the name of the manufacturer and that of the contributor of the article to "London Society."

If readers know of any other reference to valentines in the works of Dickens it would be interesting to have the facts recorded in the pages of *The Dickensian*.

THE IDEA OF FRIENDSHIP

AS REVEALED IN THE WORKS OF DICKENS

By HELEN ROBERTS (of the Sheffield Branch)

I

EVERYONE appreciates a friend, and in what estimation Dickens held friendship—true friendship—even a cursory study of his works will show. Among all classes of mankind, under many diverse circumstances, in health and sickness, in affluence and poverty, in happiness and sorrow, he shows us how one human being may help and uphold a fellow mortal by extending to him the friendly hand of kindly sympathy. In his books there is no limit to friendship, there are no class distinctions there. It is not only "like to like," we never hear an echo of the phrase "unequal friendship." There can be no such thing, he teaches. No! the poor may meet the rich on equal ground in the flowery lanes of friendship, the rich not even thinking it necessary to recognise that the cold touch of patronage would mar the strong hand clasp of mutual trust, confidence and equality—yes, equality, for Dickens, although not a Socialist, shows us that it is *the man* that counts, not his position, his rank, or his wealth, but solely the man. His views on friendship, although clearly and explicitly expressed, are not set forth in so many words, nor are they found floating on the surface of his books, for man is the one animal that has formed and appreciated such a tie from the beginning. Such being the case, there was no need for his facile pen to demonstrate a fact which has always been acknowledged. And it is rather insidiously and unobtrusively that the Socialists' leaven—"the fraternity and equality of man"—works through the whole. Dickens shows us that man was never meant to be a gregarious animal, and if, through force of circumstances, or through some flaw in his nature, either physical or moral, he is denied a human friend, he will turn to the brute creation for comfort. Bill Sikes—who cannot trust Fagin—has his dog, poor Barnaby Rudge his raven, and, in the same book, Hugh, degraded and outcast, has his cur, and at the foot of the gallows, though he will ask for no mercy or pity for himself, pleads for his dog.

But Dickens upholds no sickly sentimentality. A pair of ideal friends, Eugene Wrayburn and Mortimer Lightwood in *Our Mutual Friend*, drift through life together, from happy school days onwards, with no morbid analysis of their feelings for each other, no protestations of friendship. Yet later on one of them acknowledges that he has modelled his life, his feelings, his principles on his friend's; and the other, as he saunters through life in a bored and *blasé* fashion, coming at last to the threshold of his life's tragedy, lying maimed, disfigured, and it is thought dying, does not hesitate to throw down the barriers of restraint and reserve, and own that the one precious thing in his hitherto wasted and selfish life had been the love he bore his friend. In striking contrast to such a friendship is that between Little Dorrit and Maggy. What a wealth of protection, pity and love on the one side, and on the other, poor Maggy—whose darkened mind cannot grasp much in the world around her—has a true understanding of the existence of that love, and a perfect trust in it.

Dickens has many illustrations of such friendships—the love of the strong for the weak—awakened by the pity that is akin to love. We have the watchful care and unselfish solicitude of Nicholas Nickleby for poor Smike, which continued through poverty and adversity to prosperity, and at last to the peaceful death-bed, when both felt that such a friendship was not to be broken, even by Death. We have the friendship of Mr. Toots for little Paul Dombey; poor foolish Toots even forgets, for the nonce, his expensive tailors and his fancy waistcoats in genuine pity for the lonely delicate child. "You're a very small chap, Dombey." "Yes, I am rather small," says little Paul. Toots gradually becomes attached to the child, he follows him about and watches him. "How are you?" he would say to Paul fifty times a day. "Quite well, thank you, sir." "Then shake hands, Dombey," and when Paul dies Toots buys the shaggy mongrel dog that the little chap had fondled.

Then we have the friendship of those who admire the very different characteristics of each other. Such was that between Agnes and Dora in *David Copperfield*. Dora's amiable, loving and yet childlike character appealing to the strength of that of Agnes, while Dora's dying request that Agnes should one day marry *her* husband showed how she appreciated the nobility, fidelity and self-abnegation of her friend. Such another pair of friends were David Copperfield and Steerforth. David was drawn by the inherent good qualities in Steerforth's character, which were latent, though not strong enough to counterbalance the evil effects of an indulged childhood and undisciplined youth. Steerforth possessed that animal magnetism which is so often coupled with a winning personality, and to David he seemed one of those born to command, a veritable young Apollo; and Steerforth, who could choose his friends where he pleased, and might easily have chosen a more useful friend from a worldly point of view, was yet attracted by the single-hearted and unsuspecting nature of David; he valued the good opinion of poor innocent "Daisy" so much that he took

pains to hide from him the selfish, egotistical side of his own character. We have rather an amusing contrast to this broken friendship in the case of David and his other friend—Traddles. At first David rather "looks down" on poor Traddles and undervalues his sterling qualities, just as he over-estimates Steerforth's. But soon his views readjust themselves, and with what a masterly touch has Dickens portrayed the genial, happy, hearty scenes between the two when the broken strands of friendship are knit together again!

Another pair of real chums are Pip and Herbert in *Great Expectations*. Their friendship commences in a pugilistic encounter in a backyard, and progresses merrily through days of youthful frolics and follies. They share and share alike, even to amorous confessions and debts; they talk about Clara and Estelle, add up each other's liabilities and enjoy themselves together generally. Later we have an example of how the delicate fine feeling of one friend can find out a way to materially advance the worldly prospects of the other without wounding his susceptibility. Pip provides secretly for Herbert, and through all his own misfortunes and subsequent poverty never acknowledges what he has done for his friend, while all through these same misfortunes he is helped by the resourceful energy and cheerful good nature of Herbert. The friendship between Rachel and Stephen Blackpool in *Hard Times* is drawn on almost the same scale. Rachel admires and loves the patience and heroism with which Stephen endures his hard lot, and Stephen is helped by the very fact of knowing that there is one friend who stands by in loving pity, and shares his sorrows with him.

We have many examples of the friendship of the poor for each other. Dickens believed in the true saying "that it is the poor who help the poor." In *The Chimes* we have the poor old porter, Toby Veck, and the destitute Will Fern. "Stay," cried Trotty, catching at his hand, "Stay! The New Year can never be happy to me if we part like this, if I see the child and you go wandering away, you don't know where, without a shelter for your heads. Come home with me! I'm a poor man, living in a poor place; but I can give you shelter for one night and never miss it. Come home with me!" and he spends his poor earnings on a meal for the two wanderers and goes hungry himself. Then there is the friendship of Riah—the despised and much maligned Jew—for Lizzie Hexham and Jenny Wren. There is nothing he can hope to gain from such poor waifs of humanity, yet with what care and tenderness he watches over them and lends them all the help in his power. How very just Dickens was to give us the character of Riah to balance that of Fagin, and not to add unjustly to the libellous calumnies directed against the Jews. In *Oliver Twist*, too, we have the light-hearted and roguish *camaraderie* of Charley Bates and the Artful Dodger. Wherever one is there we find the other, and though the chagrin displayed by Bates at the arrest of the Artful is very amusing, it is none the less real.

(*To be concluded.*)

SIR LUKE FILDES'S ILLUSTRATIONS TO "EDWIN DROOD"

AN APPRECIATION

By W. A. FRASER
Author of "The Illustrators of Dickens"

THE *Mystery of Edwin Drood* has created a great deal of attention during the last year or so. Firstly through Mr. Cuming Walters's little book of "Clues" to the mystery, then by the absurd deduction that it might have been founded upon a certain notorious law case, and lastly by Mr. Comyns Carr's dramatic version of the book now being played by Mr. Beerbohm Tree's company at His Majesty's Theatre. The book has always appealed

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL AND CASTLE
Reproduced from the title-page of the original edition of "Edwin Drood"
Drawn by Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.

to the present writer as one of the most fascinating of the novelist's stories, and the fact that only half of it was written merely adds to its many attractions, one of which is that it is illustrated by a modern artist, an artist who happily is still alive, who was not imbued with the spirit of caricature in making the drawings as was Phiz and Cruikshank. And at this moment, when the book is being talked about so much, it may be of interest to Dickensians to offer an enthusiast's opinion on the delightful pictures of Sir Luke Fildes.

Mr. Charles Collins designed a most excellent cover for the monthly parts, although the exact meaning of the scenes depicted

thereon, and even the identity of the figures will always remain uncertain. The cover was doubtless intended to foreshadow the chief events and chief actors in the story, but the sadly abrupt and premature ending of the book leaves everything confused, uncertain, and dubious. Ill-health obliged Mr. Collins to resign the task of illustrating the novel, and by the advice of Sir John Millais Mr. S. Luke Fildes (now Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.) took his place. A better choice could not have been made, and for once at least Dickens had for an artist a man of real genius in his profession.

Mr. Fildes quite needlessly expressed doubts as to whether he was equal to the task of illustrating the work of the great humorist, comic drawing not being his metier. Dickens, however, reassured him upon this head. "Edwin Drood" was to be a story of serious interest well suited for the display of the powers of a serious artist. Caricature and broad humour in the illustrations would have been quite out of place and out of keeping with the general idea of the story. Mr. Fildes's studies for his designs were executed with chalk upon tinted paper; the finished drawings were made upon paper and then photographed upon boxwood blocks. The engraving was first entrusted to Dalziel Brothers, but after the first two engravings were completed a change was made at Mr. Fildes's request, and a former colleague of his, Mr. Charles Roberts, who had previously engraved Mr. Fildes's most successful drawings, undertook the task. The result in some instances, however, was disappointing. Ten out of the twelve illustrations bear the signature of C. Roberts.

The illustrations to "Edwin Drood" are as nearly perfect as black-and-white work ever can be. Not only that, but in this last effort of the master's genius the artist has understood the author and has kept pace with him. The twelve designs are all so admirable that it is difficult to select any one for special praise since all alike demand it. But perhaps the most beautiful drawing in the book is the picture entitled "Under the Trees," which forms the frontispiece to the story, and is in every respect worthy of it. "Mr. Crisparkle is Overpaid" is another design of considerable beauty. The figures and the gloomy windy threatening evening are depicted with wonderful skill and truthfulness to nature. Mr. Crisparkle himself is a triumph. He realises our ideal of the character Dickens created, and this is the case throughout the book. Rosa, Jasper, Edwin Drood, Neville Landless, Helena, Mr. Sapsea, Mr. Grewgious, and Durdles are exactly what they should be. These are not caricatures of humanity, but living men and women whom (allowing for some slight alteration in dress) we meet every day. What a richly humorous picture is that in which Durdles is shown cautioning Mr. Sapsea against boasting! And how charming are the school-girls in "Good-bye, Rosebud, darling." There is wonderful passion and power and dramatic force in "Jasper's Sacrifices," and the picture is also most beautifully finished without being overloaded with unnecessary detail; the figures, as they should be, are the most prominent objects in the scene. "Up the River" is wholly delightful!

All the illustrations are carefully finished without being in the least finnicking. In the whole dozen there is not one rough, careless, sketchy picture. Of no other artist who illustrated Dickens during the great author's lifetime or after his death can this be said. The last design, "Sleeping it Off," is truly wonderful! We are again in the opium woman's den as we were in the second illustration in the book, but this time there are only two figures, Jasper almost unconscious lying on the "large unseemly bed," and the old hag crouching cat-like and malignant over his recumbent form. The scene is grim, gruesome, and ominous of doom, death, and the

UNDER THE TREES
From a drawing by Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.

gallows to the unconscious figure. Nothing could be finer or more powerful than this. It is superior to Cruikshank's "Fagin in the Condemned Cell," inasmuch as there is no caricature in the figures, while Cruikshank's otherwise fine and powerful picture is spoilt by this fault. Had Dickens lived to finish the story, we were to have had an illustration of "Jasper in the Condemned Cell." In the hands of Mr. Luke Fildes it would certainly have been a triumph of skilful draughtmanship and dramatic power. There is not a feeble or uncertain touch in any of the illustrations to "Edwin Drood," and Sir Luke Fildes's technique is perfect. There is a pensive charm, a melancholy beauty about these designs exactly suited to the story and to the old cathedral town in which the scene is laid.

Besides the illustrations referred to above, the artist designed a charming vignette of Rochester Castle for the title page of the original edition.

SOME NEW LETTERS OF DICKENS

By O. SACK

ONE of the most enthusiastic collectors of Dickensiana in America is Mr. William Clyde Wilkins of Pittsburg. At his home he has some six hundred volumes of Dickens, a wonderful portfolio of letters written by the novelist, and a wealth of other matter of the most fascinating interest to the lover of the man whom President Roosevelt recently described as "a well-meaning pessimist."

Mr. Wilkins has just printed for private circulation a collection of some of these letters, and they make a most interesting and valuable pamphlet. The first of them dates back as far as 1832, when Dickens was on the staff of the *True Sun*. The others range from 1845 to November, 1859, one of which was written to John W. Calecaft, of the Theatre Royal, Dublin, in reference to the Amateur Company of Players, and the remainder to William Howitt. The first of Howitt's letters refers to a story he had sent for *Household Words*, but which Dickens could not use, as he had already one on the same subject by Horne in a number which was at press. This story is evidently "Jolly Burglars," in the issue dated November 23rd, 1850, for I find that story was written by R. H. Horne. In the next letter Dickens reconsiders his decision, and offers to publish Howitt's story in the Christmas number, but no story by Howitt appears therein. The other letters deal with the subjects of ghosts and haunted houses, in which Dickens did not believe, but which he was quite willing to test with his own eyes and ears. It will be remembered that the Christmas number of *All the Year Round* was called *The Haunted House*, and Dickens contributed some of the chapters. But curiously Howitt, who was interested in the supernatural, did not supply any part of it. Mr. Wilkins is to be thanked for making these letters available to others besides himself, and those who are fortunate enough to possess a copy of his excellently printed pamphlet, with the facsimiles of most of the letters, will consider it a valued addition to their Dickensiana.

COMPETITIONS FOR DICKENSIANS

THE answer to the competition, "Pickwick and the Higher Criticism," set in the January issue, is "THE TRUE LEGEND OF PRINCE BLADUD" (Chapter 36). His engagement with "the Athenian Maid" and subsequent disappointment suggest comparison with LORD BYRON'S well-known stanzas, "Maid of Athens, e'er we part, Give, oh give me back my heart," &c., &c.

Although competitors answered the first part correctly, no one gave the correct answer to the latter.

Our competition for this month is for the best essay not exceeding 1,200 words on

THE DOMESTIC ATMOSPHERE IN DICKENS'S BOOKS.

All competitors must forward 6d. with their essays, which should reach the Editor not later than the 5th of March. The whole of the entrance fees will be expended in books to be allotted in prizes, the minimum value of the first being 7s. 6d.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XXXVIII.

"BOZ"

Call him "Boz," for that is what we named him,
With tears and laughter,
Ere with our laurel wreath we proudly claimed him
For ever after.

Call him "Boz"—that was our word for him
When he was young,
And unto us, from some far corner dim,
His accents rung.

In earlier days, when first we caught the glory
Just shimmering through,
The tenderest utterance—the rarest story
We ever knew!

As little children, by their mother seated,
Group softly round
To hear her stories o'er and o'er repeated,
With awe profound,

While memory brings back dreams of joy and sweetness,
Even as he willed,
We gathered at his feet—from his completeness
Our store he filled.

We loved the author, who so loved the true,
So hated wrong;
We loved the teacher, whose great soul we knew,
Tender and strong.

We felt the loving spirit of the master
In all his creeds;
He touched the world's cold heart, and it beat faster
For human needs.

As, like an angel, visiting each dwelling
With kindly face,
He lit the fire of love, Heaven's watchword telling,
In every place.

Close up those earnest eyes to want and sorrow,
For evermore!
And bid him stand erect, upon the morrow,
Earth's labours o'er.

And, like the seraphs in the old-time vision,
Still, to and fro,
His thoughts, like spirits from yon world elysian,
Will come and go.

Putman's Monthly Magazine, August, 1870.

THE NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY

THE nucleus of this Library, which is to be placed in the Guildhall Library of the City of London, and there made accessible to all students and Dickens-lovers, is the unique collection of the late Mr. F. G. Kitton, Secretary of the Boz Club, author of several books upon Charles Dickens and his works, and illustrator of "A Week's Tramp in Dickens-Land." Soon after Mr. Kitton's death his widow received offers for the collection from wealthy American collectors and from London dealers, but she wished the collection to be kept intact, and to remain in England in some public library; hence she gave to the Dickens Fellowship the option of purchase at their own valuation. The valuers advised the payment of £250, and since then several important additions have come to the collection, which Mrs. Kitton has included without suggesting any increase of price. On examination in detail, even the original items proved to include several things of greater interest than was realised when they were valued, and this National Dickens Library includes many items which are not accessible to the public in any other collection, and some which are unobtainable at any price. The Dickensian items already in the Guildhall Library will be added to the collection, and almost all the publishers of Dickensiana have added copies of such of their books as were not already represented, so that the library to be handed over to the Lord Mayor at 3 p.m. on Dickens's birthday, February 7th, 1908, will be in every way a worthy memoriál, and such, we believe, as Charles Dickens himself would have approved.

A DICKENS LANDMARK IN SURREY

By JACK SHAW

THE monument shown in the accompanying photograph has a special interest for Dickensians. Readers of *Nicholas Nickleby* will recollect that when Smike and his protector were on their journey from London to Portsmouth (just before they had the good fortune to meet the gifted Crummles family) "they walked upon the rim of the Devil's Punch Bowl; and Smike listened with greedy interest as Nicholas read the inscription upon the stone which, reared upon that wild spot, tells of a murder committed there by night. The grass on which they stood had once been dyed with gore, and the blood of the murdered man had run down, drop by drop, into the hollow which gives the place its name. 'The Devil's Bowl,' thought Nicholas, as he looked into the void, 'never held fitter liquor than that!'" (Chap. XXII.)

The stone originally stood on the spot where the murder was committed, but when the new Portsmouth road was cut farther down the hill, skirting the Punch Bowl at a lower level, it was removed to the side of the new road where it now stands. The inscription, which is in a good state of preservation, reads as follows:—

ERECTED
IN DETESTATION OF A BARBAROUS MURDER
COMMITTED HERE ON AN UNKNOWN SAILOR
ON SEP. 24TH, 1786,
BY EDWD. LONEGAN, MICHL. CASEY, & JAMES MARSHALL,
WHO WERE ALL TAKEN THE SAME DAY
AND HUNG IN CHAINS NEAR THIS PLACE.

"Whoso sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed."—Gen. Chap. 9, Ver. 6.

ON THE BRIM OF THE DEVIL'S PUNCH BOWL
From a photograph by Victor C. Brackensieck

And the other side is inscribed:—

THIS STONE
WAS ERECTED
BY ORDER, AND AT
THE COST OF
JAMES STILWELL, ESQ.,
OF
COSFORD, 1786.
CURSED BE THE MAN WHO INJURETH
OR REMOVETH THIS STONE.

The story of the murder will be found in Alfred Rimmer's "About England with Dickens," and also in Baring-Gould's "Broom Squire."

Dickensians passing through Hindhead should make a point of seeing this stone and the grave of the murdered man in Thursley Churchyard, relics of a bygone tragedy interesting enough to have attracted the attention of the great novelist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"OUR MUTUAL FRIEND"

SIR,—May I point out that Dickens was not primarily responsible for the blunder of using the above phrase, instead of the more correct, if less euphonious one, "Our Comm on Friend"? The first fault lies with another Charles. In his essay on "Distant Correspondents," Lamb speaks of "Our mutual friend P."

Yours truly, FREDK. G. JACKSON.

8, Park Lane, Leeds, Jan., 1908.

ANDREW FAIRSERVICE AND SAM WELLER

SIR,—It may interest your readers to peruse the following quotation from Sir Walter Scott's "Rob Roy." It is spoken by Andrew Fairservice, the old gardener at the Hall, who acted as a guide to Francis Osbaldistone through Southern Scotland to Glasgow:—

"Ower mony maisters—ower mony maisters, as the paddock said to the harrow, when every tooth gae her a tig."

Is this the origin of Sam Weller's best-remembered "Wellerisms"? Dickens had doubtless read "Rob Roy," and his fertile brain would see the possibilities of further developments of this trick of speech. It may be that Scott copied from an earlier writer, and that Dickens also drew on the same original; but perhaps the theory of copying is more probable than the supposition of independent invention, even though the second author may have forgotten where he read the phrase.

Yours truly, E. BASIL LUPTON.

76, Harehills Avenue, Leeds, Jan., 1908.

THE CHRISTMAS NUMBERS OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND"

SIR,—I venture to send you some comments on a passage in an article which appeared in *The Dickensian* of November (vol. iii. p. 299) under the above heading:—

"When each of these stories appeared it was not known—indeed the information has only recently been made available—who the authors of the various chapters were."

The writer of the article had apparently never seen the volume entitled "The Nine Christmas Numbers of All the Year Round" . . . London: 26, Wellington Street, Strand, W.C. (i.e. the All the Year Round office), and Messrs. Chapman & Hall, 193, Piccadilly, W. (no date). I have a copy before me, which I bought in 1882. It has a former owner's autograph, with the date "Christmas, 1870." In it is a page of contents.

In the remarks which immediately follow I except *No Thoroughfare*, about which I shall write further on. This table of contents gives all the authors' names which are given in the new edition, 1907, excepting Robert Buchanan, the author of the poem in *A Message from the Sea*. In the new edition there are enlargements of some of the names; George Augustus Sala for G. A. Sala, Adelaide Anne Procter for Adelaide Procter, Charles Alston Collins for Charles Collins, and Holme Lee (Harriett Parr) for Harriett Parr.

The way in which the last enlargement appears would suggest that Harriett Parr, instead of being the real name, is a pseudonym. Hesba Stretton appears frequently among the authors, but her real name is not given in either edition. According to Halkett and Laing's Dictionary she was Sarah Smith; according to Allibone and the London Library Catalogue, Hannah Smith.

In the new edition (*Somebody's Luggage*) the two chapters "His

Portmanteau" and "His Hatbox," being one story, remain, as in the reprint of 1870 (or about), attributed to "The Authoress of the Valley of a Hundred Fires." The name of this authoress is Mrs. Stretton—see "Notes and Queries," 10th S. viii. 149, 253, 313.

The last note in "Notes and Queries" came from the Honourable Kathleen Ward in answer to a query of mine. She has subsequently been kind enough to send me further information as to Mrs. Stretton, both from her own memory, and from that of her cousin, Miss R. H. Beddoes, of Hesterworth, Aston-on-Clun, great-niece of Maria Edgeworth, and distantly related to Mrs. Stretton. I have also obtained information from Captain Walter de Winton of Maesllwch Castle, grandson of Mrs. Stretton. Mrs. Stretton, the authoress of "The Valley of a Hundred Fires," and therefore of "His Portmanteau" and "His Hatbox," was one of the large family of the Rev. John Collinson, whose portrait and whose wife's portrait are drawn in "The Valley of a Hundred Fires." Another of the large family was Admiral Collinson, of "The Haven, Ealing." Miss Julia Collinson married firstly Mr. Walter de Winton, and secondly, Major Richard (?) Stretton. She was a very beautiful woman. Among her other books are "The Queen of the County," in which—so Miss Beddoes believes—the authoress was the heroine, and "Margaret and her Bridesmaids." One of her sisters was the wife of Archdeacon de Winton, a cousin of Mrs. Stretton's first husband.

In "Notes and Queries" the above references are s.v. "Mrs. Marsh, Authoress of 'The Valley of a Hundred Fires,'" because Halkett and Laing's Dictionary erroneously attributes the book to some "Mrs. Marsh" (no Christian name given).

I have no reason for thinking that there was any relationship between Mrs. Stretton and Miss Smith ("Hesba Stretton").

It is worth remarking that, if the edition of 1870 (or about) is, as it appears to be, an exact reprint of the original Christmas numbers, each chapter in *Mugby Junction* was attributed to its author in the first issue in 1866, seeing that they are all given on the first page of the reprint.

As to *No Thoroughfare*, the table of contents in the reprint of thirty-seven years ago gives simply Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins as joint authors of the whole story. In "Christmas Stories," from *Household Words*, and *All the Year Round*, in the large-type edition of Dickens's Works, 1876, a note preceding the story says:—"This was written by Mr. Wilkie Collins conjointly with Mr. Dickens; the only portions furnished exclusively by Mr. Dickens being the 'Overture' and the 'Third Act,' Mr. Collins contributing to act first and fourth, and writing the whole of the second."

The new (1907) edition attributes the "Overture," and Acts i., iii., iv. as above, but makes Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins joint authors of Act ii.

One would like to know which of the two last-mentioned editions is right.

A reprint of *Household Words Christmas Stories*, 1851-1858," was published by Ward, Lock, and Tyler, Paternoster Row, in or about 1870. My copy has bound with it a list of S. O. Beeton's books and serials dated Christmas, 1870, also a former owner's name with that date, the same as that in my *All the Year Round* reprint of 1870 (or about). This book, however, has no table of contents, the chapters being anonymous. It does not contain *A Christmas Tree*, which appeared in 1850. This is in the new edition, 1906.

Messrs. Chapman & Hall are to be congratulated on having republished the eighteen *Christmas Stories*. They are most charming little volumes.

Yours faithfully,

ROBERT PIERPOINT.

8A, Birkenhall Mansions,
January 5th, 1908.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

CHARITABLE AND NEEDLEWORK GUILD.—The Hon. Secretary is pleased to say that, owing to increased donations from members and friends, the Committee has been able to render more assistance than usual during the cold weather, quantities of coals, food, and clothing have been despatched in many directions, and gratefully received. The eighty-two-year-old pensioner is rejoicing in the knowledge that her rent is to be paid by the Guild for the remainder of her life, and that she will also receive other little helps from the same quarter. The Hon. Secretary is glad that her last appeal in *The Dickensian* has met with warmer support; a number of donations having been received and thankfully acknowledged by her. There are many cases similar to the one mentioned, and the Committee feels that the "Pension Fund" if well supported by donations, however small, will be the means by which many deserving sufferers may be reached.

Miss Miniken would also appeal for hearty support for the Bazaar, which will be held, all well, at St. Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, E.C., on Friday, March 27th. Special efforts are being made to render this a success. Any help of any kind will be welcome. Gifts for sale—especially those suitable for gentlemen—will be gratefully received; date for sending in will be announced in March issue.

LONDON.—The headquarters meeting took place at the Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, on January 8th, when Mr. J. Cuming Walters read a paper entitled "Dickens's Ideal of Womanhood." Mr. Walters confined his remarks to the young heroines of the novels and stories, leaving the broader types of women—older characters such as Mrs. Gamp, Miggs, Nancy, Mrs. Nickleby, Betsy Trotwood, and many others—to a future lecture. He began by showing that in Dickens's early books he moulded his young ladies on the fashionable heroine of the day, with Fielding's Sophia as more or less a prototype. This was to be seen in the characters of Arabella Allen, Rose Maylie, Kate Nickleby, Madeline Bray, in the early books, and in several instances in the latter books. But later, commencing with Dolly Varden, Dickens began to develop real personality in his heroines, and in most of his subsequent books a typical Dickensian ideal of what a wife and mother should be is to be found, and readers of the novels will easily name them. Mr. Walters proceeded to show by deduction and quotation that Dickens's ideal of womanhood, was such as those who possessed qualities like Agnes Wickfield particularly, and Ruth Pinch, Esther Summerson, Bella Wilfer—whose object in life was to make home and home-life a shrine, and who possessed the inherent qualities for accomplishing their ambition. There are many who assert that Dickens could not draw a real woman character apart from the broad character studies. Mr. Walters made out his case to the contrary in an ably and well considered paper, which had the added quality of being a piece of good literature. Mr. Snowden Ward, who acted as chairman, Mr. B. W. Matz, and Mr. J. W. T. Ley spoke to the subject at the end.

BRIGHTON.—The bitter weather did not prevent a good muster of the members at the meeting held on January 4th. The President, Mr. H. Davey, began by referring to the loss sustained by the recent death of Mr. Colin Covell, who was the original founder of the Brighton Branch, and its first hon. secretary; and, after some highly appreciative remarks upon the moral worth and intellectual abilities of Mr. Covell, he moved a vote of condolence to the relatives, the meeting rising in solemn silence as an acquiescence. The programme of the evening had been arranged by Mrs. Maxwell Davis, who is President of the Needlework

Guild, which has done so much for the Tiny Tims of Brighton. Mrs. Maxwell Davis herself contributed a recitation in stirring style, "The Song of Christmas" (Dickens), and a pianoforte solo ("Melodies on the Songs of Dickens," arranged by herself), which was encored. Mrs. Maxwell Davis also made an interesting speech on the love of Dickens for children. Mr. W. Fowler recited a portion of the "Christmas Carol." The rest of the programme consisted of lantern slides, which portrayed the story of Gabriel Grubb (read by Mr. Moulton), and Mr. Bransby Williams's impersonations of leading characters in Dickens's novels, which included Sydney Carton, Peggoty, and Mantalini, which greatly charmed the audience. A vote of thanks was proposed to Mrs. Maxwell Davis, who had kindly provided the entire evening's entertainment, which was carried with enthusiasm.

BRIXTON.—A New Year's Entertainment took place on January 7th, in the Lecture Hall of Brixton Independent Church. Mr. S. Marriott presided. Mr. S. Langton Johnson gave a series of impersonations of Dickensian characters most successfully; specially so, it was thought, were those of Pecksniff, Grimwig, and Rogue Riderhood. Together with Miss Florence Watson and other artistes, he also presented scenes from *Copperfield, Old Curiosity Shop, Oliver Twist*, and *Tale of Two Cities*, and the dramatic efforts of all were most satisfactory, eliciting repeated applause from a large and delighted audience. The Misses Sherlock sang excellently several songs, as did Mr. H. Wilfrid Mayes, while Miss Mabel Cobeldick rendered high service at the piano. Altogether, this was one of the most interesting and successful evenings ever experienced by the Dickens Fellowship at Brixton.

DUBLIN.—This first and, so far, only branch of the Fellowship in Ireland has flourished exceedingly since its inauguration last July, having enrolled well over 200 members, the number still increasing. On Christmas Day the Dublin newsboys were treated to a hearty dinner by the members in the Sackville Café, kindly placed at their disposal by Mr. W. H. Huish, who superintended all the arrangements, which were carried out to the greatest possible advantage. One hundred and seventy boys and one little girl (who succeeded in obtaining admission unnoticed, and received a good dinner as the reward of her ingenuity!) were substantially regaled with soup, roast beef, and vegetables, and plum pudding. The ladies and gentlemen of the Fellowship assisted in seeing to the wants of the juvenile guests, each of whom was presented with a "surprise-packet," containing a mince-pie and fruit, before leaving. They thoroughly enjoyed the good fare provided, and loud cheers were raised for the Dickens Fellowship, the various Dublin newspaper companies, and all who had contributed to the feast. So generously was the dinner fund subscribed to that it was further decided to give a New Year's treat to the adult poor of the city, two hundred of whom, including fifty girls, were entertained by the Fellowship on New Year's Night at the Molesworth Hall. A meat tea was provided on this occasion, and was presided over by Sir Charles Cameron, President of the Branch, who, in common with the members of the Fellowship, spared no pains in attending to the guests. Tea was served at six o'clock, and was followed at 7.30 by a concert, presided over by Mr. J. T. Robson, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. At the conclusion of a first-class musical programme, Mr. Huish addressed the gathering in a few well-chosen words, and, hearty cheers having been raised, the proceedings terminated. The success with which both of these charitable entertainments were attended is mainly due to the enterprise and energy of Messrs. Huish and Robson, who devoted themselves in the most indefatigable manner to the arranging and carrying through of the necessary details.

FOREST GATE.—On January 2nd a successful dinner and party were held at the George and Vulture, Lombard Street. Thirty members attended. Songs and recitations were contributed by Madame Lena Michelbacher, Mr. E. S. Burdett, Mr. Wm. Graham, Mr. C. E. Edson, and Mr. C. Truscott. On January 8th a paper entitled "Education's Debt to Charles Dickens" was read by Mr. H. Herbert. It was received with earnest attention and keen appreciation. Mr. H. E. Deighton presided, and a discussion followed. On January 15th over two hundred of the poorest children of the neighbourhood were provided with a tea and Punch and Judy show entertainment, at the Barclay Hall, Green Street. The children were delighted, and showed their appreciation of the feast by not leaving a morsel. Two oranges were given to each child on leaving the hall. More than thirty members of the Branch helped in the good work, the Hon. Secretary's wife being indefatigable.

GLOUCESTER.—The last meeting of the Branch was held at Northgate Mansions, Mr. H. Godwin Chance presiding. Readings were given by Mr. E. J. C. Palmer (Mr. Micawber's denunciation of Uriah Heep), by Mr. Juckes (David Copperfield's return visit to the old boat), and by Mr. C. H. Fox (the wreck scene, which culminated in the death of Ham). The discussion, which was adjourned from the previous meeting on the characters of Dora Spendlow and Agnes Wickfield, was resumed by Mr. H. W. Bruton, and the President, in summing up, went at some length into the development of ideals of womanhood by Dickens, and his treatment of women in his various novels.

LIVERPOOL.—December 17th was the ladies' field day; the evening was set apart from them, and, like Mark Tapley, they "came out strong." Miss Alexander read an original and witty paper on "What we talk about"; Miss Stewart gave a thoughtful address on "The Education of the Lower Classes"; Mrs. Bell, the treasurer, gave her opinion on "What the State should do for the Child," and Miss Lloyd and Mrs. Jaggard provided excellent papers on the question, "Is Truth Compatible with Politeness?" Mr. Wright made a very popular chairman.

On January 7th the President, Mr. Edgar Browne, F.R.C.S., took the chair. A vote of thanks was passed to the secretary, Mr. Mitchell, who is retiring owing to ill-health, and Mr. James Watkins was appointed in his place. The subject for the evening was "The Extension of our Social Work." Papers were read by Mr. Auerbach and the secretary, which were much appreciated.

LUDDENDEN.—"There must have been some few occurrences in the past year to which we can look back with a smile of cheerful recollection, if not with a feeling of heartfelt thankfulness" (*Sketches by Boz*, Chap. III.). The members of the Luddenden Dickens Fellowship certainly endorse that, because during the past year they were organised (thanks to the secretary, Mr. F. Beken), and first met, an acknowledged coterie who admired—nay loved—the writings of Charles Dickens. And to celebrate this they held a social gathering on New Year's Eve, when fellowship characterised their every event. Councillor S. Park took the chair, and encouragingly spoke to the members, who had assembled in good numbers. Miss Yates, who had thoughtfully organised and suggested the social, appropriately recited from Dickens's "The Drunkard's Death." Another good elocutionist was Mr. J. Clay, who gave "The Ballad of Splendid Silence." Miss Alice Greenwood and Mr. W. Alderson sang, and Mr. C. Elliott was the accompanist. Mr. L. Chadwick contributed a few selections on the zonophone. A bright, beautifully decorated room, full of cheery people, made the meeting an enjoyable one. At intervals fruit was distributed and supper served. Mr. E. Sutcliffe proposed, and Mr. A. Yates seconded, a motion of thanks to the entertainers. Many new

members have joined the Fellowship, and a prosperous session is anticipated.

MANHATTAN.—The Pre-Christmas Dinner of the Manhattan Branch was held at the Maison Delenne, over 100 members and guests being present. Mr. J. Woolsey Shepard, the President, was in the chair. Mr. Leipziger spoke most earnestly and enthusiastically of Dickens as an educator, saying at one point that if a person, studying with that intention, read Dickens alone, he would be the perfect teacher. Mr. John Dewitt Warner discoursed on Dickens as compared with other writers. Mr. C. H. Govan, after an interesting account of the relations between Charles Dickens and Washington Irving, read a long letter from Dickens to Irving. This letter was exhibited by the owner, Mr. Frank Foulke. Miss Pearl Eytinge recited "Bob Cratchit's Christmas Dinner" with a great deal of effect. Mr. Raymond Robins spoke of *Hard Times* and the people of Coke Town, and led from that into present conditions in America. Mr. E. E. Horton also addressed the meeting, and Mr. Flavelle and Miss Dorothy Baula sang.

MELBOURNE.—The October meeting was held on the 4th ult., at the Austral Salon. The President, Rev. E. Rorke, occupied the chair. A hearty vote of thanks was tendered to the retiring secretary, Mr. J. H. Crowther, for the excellent manner in which he had conducted the affairs of the Fellowship during his long term of office. The following programme was rendered:—Address on *Barnaby Rudge*, Mr. A. P. Du Soir; paper, "Dickens as an Educator," Miss Godwin Smith; paper, "Dickensian Dietetics," Mr. F. Scrivenor; recital, "The Storm" (*David Copperfield*), Mr. J. H. Crowther; reading, "Pickwick on the Ice," Mr. W. A. Windas.

The November meeting was held on the 4th, at the same place, Mr. J. H. Crowther, V.P., in the absence of the President, occupying the chair. Reference was made to the very sudden death of a very highly cultured member of the Fellowship, Mrs. Wm. Westwood. The following programme was rendered to a large and enthusiastic audience:—Paper, *Our Mutual Friend*, Mr. W. A. Calloway; lecture, "The Range of Genius of Charles Dickens," Mr. A. P. Du Soir; recitation, "Moddle and Charity" (*Martin Chuzzlewit*), Miss May Windas; reading, *Little Dorritt*, Miss F. Haig; recitation (in character), "Little Nell's Grandfather," Mr. Norman Pierce.

NOTTINGHAM.—The Branch arranged a recital last month of "A Christmas Carol," by Mr. Frank Speaight, who was heard to great advantage, his great accomplishments combining perfect enunciation with much histrionic ability. The Mayor of Nottingham (Mr. J. T. Spalding), who is President of the Branch, presided, and in his introductory remarks said that at Christmas they might miss many of the more boisterous forms of amusement which Dickens depicted, but the spirit of charity was always prevalent amongst them. The spirit that breathed through "A Christmas Carol," he said, appealed to all. At intervals musical numbers were contributed in charming style by Miss Constance Goodliffe, who sang the "Flower Song" from "Faust," and "Summer Rain" (C. Willeby). Miss L. Jackson accompanied. As a result of the recital, a substantial sum was handed to the Nottingham General Hospital.

SHEFFIELD.—Mr. Frank Speaight paid another welcome visit to Sheffield on December 10th. At the Montgomery Hall, before a full attendance, he recited "A Christmas Carol." The recital was very much enjoyed, and Mr. Speaight was warmly applauded at the end of each "stave."

An excellent stage presentation of "The Cricket on the Hearth," arranged as a Christmas play, was given at the Lyceum Theatre last month

by the Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Society. Mrs. T. H. Warskett played the lovable part of Dot Peerybingle with great fidelity, and Mr. W. Howard Williams was excellent as the warm-hearted John. The odious Tackleton was represented by Mr. Sydney D. Gent, who was most convincing. The blind girl, Bertha Plummer, was faithfully depicted by Miss Helen Roberts, and her father, Caleb Plummer, by Mr. T. H. Warskett. All the other parts were in good hands. The acting as a whole was careful, almost to the verge of a fault. A curtain raiser, "The Footmen's Swarry," was also presented. This was a dramatisation from the *Pickwick Papers*, by Mrs. Warskett, and was a delightfully humorous little piece, to which all who took part did great justice.

A touch of originality was introduced into the whist drive held at the Cutlers' Hall on January 10th, each player wearing a badge which bore the name of one of Dickens's characters. Mr. Pickwick anxiously waited the advent of Mrs. Bardell as his partner, and in other ways much amusement was caused. There were about 150 members present.

WEST LONDON.—The Branch met on December 19th, in the Lecture Hall, Ealing. Mr. Jacobs presided, and the hall was well filled to hear Mr. Langton Johnson and Miss Watson give their splendid entertainment. Miss Clemens was kind enough to sing during the intervals. Mr. Langton Johnson and Miss Watson gave the scene where David Copperfield first quarrels with Dora, followed by one from *The Old Curiosity Shop*, the meeting of Dick Swiveller and the Marchioness. Mr. Langton Johnson then appeared as Bill Sikes, with Miss Watson as Nancy. Very effective were the three scenes from the *Tale of Two Cities*. Sydney Carton was well impersonated by Mr. Langton Johnson, and Lucie Manette by Miss Dora Drake, whilst Miss Watson was excellent as the Little Seamstress in the touching lines before the execution. Mr. Langton Johnson then made lightning changes, appearing as Old Grimwig, Mr. Micawber, Mr. Pecksniff, and Uriah Heep.

OTHER MEETINGS.

GLASGOW DICKENS SOCIETY.—The true Dickens spirit of brightening the lives of the poor at Christmas time was given real effect to on December 20th by this society. They had gathered together from the slums about 300 of the poorest children to dinner, and it proved a great success. They had a good supply of hot potatoes and hot steak pie, followed by a plentiful ration of plum-pudding, piping hot. Mr. J. D. Parke (one of the vice-presidents) explained why the children had been called together, and welcomed them in the name of the society. Cinematograph, gramophone, and singing made up the evening, and the children separated with a very lusty cheer to the donors. The idea was that of Mr. H. C. Meiner, and he also carried out the details.

SCARBOROUGH.—In the interests of the Wesley Brotherhood, Mr. Councillor Dennis gave several readings from "A Christmas Carol," on January 6th. There was a good audience, and, judging from the marked attention and the frequent applause of the audience, it was greatly appreciated. The readings were interspersed with Christmas music, sung by the choir. The Rev. E. Sholl Richards, President of the Brotherhood, occupied the chair, supported by the secretary, Mr. S. Clarkson.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

The Mystery of Edwin Drood, &c., and *Reprinted Pieces*, in the "National" Edition. (Sold in sets only.) 2 vols. 10s. 6d. net each. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd.

The Mystery of Edwin Drood. "His Majesty's Theatre" Edition, with

programme of play and portrait of Mr. Tree. 1s. net. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd.

A Christmas Carol. Class books of English literature series. Introduction and notes by Gordon Browne. 1s. London: Longmans, Green & Co.

Readings from Dickens for Schools and Homes. London: Cassell & Co.

Keys to the Drood Mystery. By Edwin Charles. London: Collier & Co. 1s. net.

Character Portraits from Dickens. Arranged by Charles Welch. With portrait. London: Chatto & Windus. 3s. 6d. net.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

"News of Christmas: Charles Dickens's Message." *Standard*, December 12.

"Novel Yuletides: Dickens's." *Answers*, December 14.

"The Christmas Carol: Dickens and Birmingham Institute." *Birmingham Daily Mail*, December 21.

"Books and Writers: Charles Dickens." *Catholic Fireside*, December 20.

"Christmas in Fiction." *Leigh Journal*, December 21.

"A Very Moderate Christmas." By Harold Spender. *Daily Chronicle*, December 26.

"Children of Charity." *The Tribune*, December 26.

"Dickens's Christmas Carol. *Primitive Methoaist Leader*, December 26.

"Dickens as Critic." *The Era*, December 28.

"The Dolly Varden Play." *The Times*, December 17; *Daily Chronicle*, December 18; *Daily Telegraph*, December 19; *Stage*, December 19; *Referee*, December 22; *Kentish Mercury*, December 27; and other papers.

"No Bad Friends at Christmas." By. Rev. Jas. Learmount. *Sunday Chronicle*, December 28.

"Charles Dickens as a Socialist." By Edwin Pugh. *The New Age*, December 28, January 4, 11, 18.

"Some Rare Dickens Play Bills." By W. P. Beazell. *Pittsburg (U.S.A.) Index*, December 28.

"The Cedars of Gad's Hill." *Morning Post*, December 31.

"Pickwick: Seventy Years After." By Hammond Hall. *Liverpool Daily Post*, January 3 and 4.

"How Dickens Celebrated Christmas." By His Grandson. *The Ladies' Home Journal*, December.

"The Lazy Tour of Dickens and Wilkie Collins." By the Editor. *The Cyclist Touring Club Gazette*, January.

"In the Days of My Youth: Bransby Williams." *M.A.P.*, January 4.

"Dickens Letter." Facsimile. *Great Western Magazine*. January.

"The Undying Charm of Dickens." *The People's Friend*, January 13.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood." Facsimile of Cover. *Daily News*, January 1.

"Edwin Drood: Criticism of Mr. Comyns Carr's Solution." By J. Cuming Walters. *Daily Chronicle*, January 1.

"A Chat with Mr. Tree." *Daily Telegraph*, January 2.

"Mr. Tree as John Jasper." By Marie Corelli. *Daily Chronicle*, January 4.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood." By L.M. *Daily Mail*, January 4.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood." Play. *Times*, *Daily Chronicle*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Westminster Gazette*, *Daily News*, *Morning Leader*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, and other papers, January 6; also leading Provincial Papers; *Sketch* (illustrated), January 8; *Black and White* (illustrated), *Athenæum*, *Academy*, January 11.

"The Real Edwin Drood." By Haldane Macfall. *Daily Chronicle*, January 8.

"The Secret of Edwin Drood." Interview with Mr. Comyns Carr. *Daily Chronicle*, January 9.

"The Drood Mystery." Mr. Hall Caine's Reply to Mr. Tree. *Daily Chronicle*, January 14.

"Recital of 'A Christmas Carol' and the Law." Leader in *Liverpool Echo*, January 10.

"Dickens's Love for Children." *The Federal Magazine*, January.

"Dickens's Children." *Bristol Times*, January 11.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

4. Liverpool Branch: Readings by Members, at Royal Institution, at 8.
7. Birthday Celebrations—
   Sheffield Branch, at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.
   Birmingham Branch: Lecture, "Dickens's Ideas and Ideals of Womanhood," by Mr. J. Cuming Walters, at Association Buildings, Dale End, at 8.
   Manchester Branch, at Onward Hall, at 7.30.
   Southampton Branch: "An Evening with *Dombey and Son*," at Mount Pleasant Council School, at 8.
   Hull Branch: Dramatic Costume Recitals, by Mr. W. Edmund Kaye, at Lecture Hall, Kingston Square, at 8.
   Shrewsbury Branch, at County Café, at 8.
   Stockport Branch, at Sunday School, at 8.
   Edinburgh Branch, at 5, St. Andrew's Square, at 8.
   Bristol Branch: Annual Dinner.
   Dublin Branch, at 8.
8. London: Birthday Celebration, at Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand. Address by Mr. Henry F. Dickens, K.C., and speeches by Vice-Presidents. Dramatic Recitals arranged by Mr. Ernest Wellbeloved, at 8.
   Brighton Branch: Birthday Celebration, at Steine House, at 8.
11. Brixton Branch: Recitals by Prof. W. Miles, in aid of the "National Dickens Library Fund," at Independent Church, at 8.
   Mr. F. T. Harry's Dickensian Recital, at the Cripplegate Theatre, Golden Lane, E.C.
12. Forest Gate Branch: Short Papers, &c., at Earlham Hall, at 8.
   Shrewsbury Branch: Fortnightly Meeting, at County Café, at 8.
   Bristol Branch: "Some Less-known Male Characters of Dickens," by Miss Tarr, at 20, Berkeley Square, at 8.
13. Rochester Branch: Monthly Meeting, at Bull Hotel, at 8.
18. Sheffield Branch: Recital of *Dombey and Son*, at Montgomery Hall, at 8, by Mr. William Miles.
   Liverpool Branch: Recital by Miss Helen Brinckman, at Royal Institution, at 8.
19. Forest Gate Branch: "A Dickens Evening," at Y.M.C.A., 228, Romford Road.
20. Edinburgh Branch: *Dombey and Son*. Papers and discusion, at 5, St. Andrew's Square, at 8.
21. Hull Branch: *Our Mutual Friend*, at Shakespeare Hall, at 8.
   Hastings Branch: Lantern Lecture, "A Chat about Dickens," by B. W. Matz.
26. Shrewsbury Branch: Fortnightly Meeting, at County Café, at 8.
27. West London Branch: Social Evening, at Municipal Buildings, at 8. Tickets, 1s.; Non-members, 1s. 6d. In aid of the "National Dickens Library" Fund.
   Blackheath Branch: "Dickens and Religion," by Mr. H. Weston Wells, at Avenue House, Avenue Road, Lewisham, at 8.
28. Birmingham Branch: Dramatic Performance.

CHARLES DICKENS

Drawn from life by Charles Martin, 1844

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